

Message Text

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SUBJ: GENEVA GROUP, ELEVENTH SESSION, GENEVA, FEB 4-8, 1974

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1. REPLIES TO QUERIES CONTAINED REFTEL AS FOLLOWS:

A. IN THE ELEVEN CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL, TWELVE-NATION GENEVA GROUP CONSULTATION ON SPECIALIZED AGENCIES THE TRADITION EXISTS THAT THE CO-CHAIRMEN WILL PROVIDE CONFERENCE FACILITIES AND HOST A RECEPTION FOR PARTICIPANTS. THIS TRADITION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN BASED ON THE IDEA THAT IN RETURN FOR THE HONOR AND RESPONSIBILITY (PLUS SUBSTANTIAL ADVANTAGES) OF BEING THE LEADERS, THE JOINT CHAIRMEN WOULD PROVIDE FACILITIES. SIMILARLY ALL LOCAL GROUP MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR ARE HELD AT US OR UK MISSIONS AND THESE MISSIONS PROVIDE SECRETARIAT SERVICES. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT BENEFITS THAT ACCRUE TO US INTERESTS FROM THIS LEADERSHIP ROLE, THE COST SEEMS SMALL. (IT ALSO TRADITIONAL THAT EACH YEAR THE SWISS, GERMANS, JAPANESE AND FRENCH HOST DINNERS AND LUNCHEONS FOR GOVERNMENTAL REPS AT CONSULTATION). IN EARLIER YEARS US SHARE OF COSTS WERE SOMEWHAT LESS BECAUSE RECEPTION (AND CONFERENCE) WAS TRADITIONALLY HELD AT US MISSION. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF NON-AVAILABILITY US MISSION FACILITY OWING TO ITS USE BY US SALT DELEGATION IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY FOR PAST TWO YEARS (1973/74) TO RENT OUTSIDE FACILITIES FOR BOTH CONFERENCE AND RECEPTION.

B. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR

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CONSULTATION, FINDING CONFERENCE FACILITIES, HIRING OF

INTERPRETERS AND ARRANGING FOR RECEPTION IS JOINTLY UNDERTAKEN BY US AND UK CHAIRMEN AND IMPLEMENTED BY APPROPRIATE STAFF ELEMENTS OF THE TWO MISSIONS. THE COSTS ARE SPLIT 50-50.

C. ALL ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE FOR A TRADITIONAL FUNCTION AND IT WAS TOO LATE TO CANCEL OR MAKE ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. MISSION HAD BEEN IN ALMOST DAILY CONTACT WITH VARIOUS IO OFFICIALS RE THE PLANNING OF CONSULTATION FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. THERE WAS AT NO TIME ANY INDICATION THAT THE US INTENDED REDUCE ITS PARTICIPATION OR SHARE OF EXPENSES OF CONSULTATION. GIVEN THE HEAVY CONFERENCE SCHEDULE IN GENEVA OVER THE PAST YEAR IT HAD BEEN DETERMINED USEFUL AND NECESSARY TO GIVE FIRM COMMITMENTS FOR CONFERENCE SPACE AND RECEPTION FACILITIES MANY WEEKS IN ADVANCE IN ORDER TO ENSURE THEIR AVAILABILITY FOR THE CONSULTATION.

2. ALTHOUGH THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE CO-CHAIRMANSHIP SHOULD BE ROTATED AMONG OTHER GROUP MEMBERS OR RETAINED BY THE US/UK HAD BEEN ONLY RARELY THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION OVER THE YEARS, IN THE FACE OF A FIRM PROPOSAL BY THE JAPANESE MISSION THAT SOME SUCH CHANGE IN ARRANGEMENTS BE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION THIS YEAR, A LAST MINUTE DECISION BY THE US NOT TO PAY ITS SHARE OF COSTS OF THIS YEAR'S CONSULTATION COULD HAVE LED TO UNDESIRABLE MISINTERPRETATION BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP.

3. IT OUR OPINION THAT ANNUAL CONSULTATION IS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY IN YEAR FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL OFFICIALS OF GOVERNMENTS OF 12 PRINCIPAL WESTERN CONTRIBUTORS TO SHARE VIEWPOINTS IN BOTH FORMAL AND INFORMAL BASIS. WE THINK US OBJECTIVE IN TERMS OF BETTER MANAGEMENT AND BUDGETARY SAVINGS COULD BENEFIT FROM MORE RATHER THAN LESS SUCH OCCASIONS.

4. INDEED A GOOD CASE COULD BE MADE FOR INCREASING RATHER THAN CURTAILING THE US COMMITMENT TO THE GENEVA GROUP ACTIVITIES. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE POTENTIAL OF THIS FUNCTION IS ON RISE PARTICULARLY AT THIS TIME WHEN THERE IS EVIDENCE OF STRONGER INTEREST ON THE PART OF OTHER MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS IN ECONOMIES AND IMPROVED MANAGEMENT.

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5. FOREGOING PRESENTS BACKGROUND AND RATIONAL FOR COURSE OF ACTION IN US SHARING WITH UK COST FOR MODEST RECEPTION WHICH BY THIS TIME IS REGARDED AS PART AND PARCEL OF CONSULTATION ITSELF. WE HAD HOPED DEPT WOULD UNDERSTAND OUR SITUATION AND CONCUR IN REQUEST FOR ACTIVITY WHICH IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS OF MEETING. SINCE RECEPTION CO-HOSTED BY US AND UK AS CO-CHAIRMEN FROM CAPITALS, WE HOPE DEPT MAY

RECONSIDER REQUEST AND SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO APPROVE MODEST
SUM OF \$150 ADDITIONAL TO FUNDS ORIGINALLY AUTHORIZED FOR
REPRESENTATION. DALE

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